1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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175 discussions, it is part of the Santal living cultural heritage and 648 hence of continuing influence.

669 Various investigations of the rebellion support Man's con- [173] clusion that the following four Santal grievances were chiefly 538 responsible for the rebellion: (1) "grasping and rapacious money lenders"; (2) "personal and hereditary debt bondage"; (3) "corruption and extortion by police helping money-lenders"; (4) "impossibility of Santal getting court redress" (Man 1867: from Culshaw and Archer 1945). A fifth contributing factor of an endogenous nature is what Man describes as Santal "improvidence."[4] Leaving aside Man's pejoratives, there is abundant evidence that his understanding of the rebellion was substantially correct. By legal and extra-legal means the Santal were systematically being stripped of their ownership rights over their land and becoming tenants and even slaves of Hindus who knew how to manipulate the law and were accustomed to gaining their ends in the context of the market.

The Santal felt themselves exploited, and not without cause. The emphasis in their culture on "redistribution"[5] and other leveling mechanisms plus their heavy commitment to "pleasure" made the Santal easy prey of the merchant and money-lender. To the British observers and to the Hindus the Santal were "improvident." Ultimately the Santal erupted in a violent revolt during which they mutilated a number of Hindu money-lenders and took vengeance on guilty and innocent alike. One reads of a Hindu money lender whose limbs were severed one

[4] See Datta 1940 for the most complete bibliography of relevant primary documents.

[5] Polanyi 1957.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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175 it is difficult to estimate the territory involved from the information I obtained.
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Though the rebellions of both the northern and southern Santal were unsuccessful, they did draw attention to the plight of the Santal and thus led to enactment of some partially ameliorative judicial and administrative reforms. At the same time, the Santal must have recognized after these defeats that under prevailing conditions, increased political power and improvement in rank were not to be obtained by military might. Evidence to be presented later suggests that this recognition contributed to a decline in solidarity.

• 173 The dream of ancient days of independence, which, as has
648 been seen, antedated the rebellions, is a kind of dream which is continually nourished by the character of Santal-Hindu social relations. Santal mythology of the nineteenth century and the present is replete with allusions to former days of independence and glory. One favorite myth reported in the nineteenth century and still prevalent describes a mighty kingdom which the Santal once constituted. Each clan had a specialized function, like that of a Hindu caste: the Kisku were kings, the Murmu priests, the Soren warriors, etc.[13] The Santal are thus pictured as independent, powerful, and constituted exactly in the image of an ideal Hindu kingdom. Like all current dreams of the past, this myth expresses current interests. It says that "we were once great as the Hindus presently are." Though serving as a charter for present independence and improved rank, like the emulative symbols of the rebellion, it is Hindu greatness which is sought.

According to mythological history, the Santal were continu-

[13] Bodding 1942:10.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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ally forced to flee the areas where they settled. "As soon as we have cleared the jungle in any country, the Deko come and rob us of it. Still if the Sahabs nowadays did not help them, we should soon drive them to the other side of the Ganges."[14]

A myth concerned with the days before the rebellion refers to the differential emulation of the rich and powerful which has been previously mentioned. It describes the Santal as fleeing from a place called Champa to Saont, where their Rājās adopted Hindu religious practices and set themselves up as Rājputs, intermarrying with a local Rājput family. But according to mythology the people would not follow their converted Rājā and therefore fled to Santal Parganas. Another version of the myth tells of the daughter of a Kisku king who had intercourse with someone of another tribe. The illegitimate child of this union grew up to become the chief advisor of the Kisku king, who sought to arrange a Santal marriage; the Santal people refused, and the king, in anger, threatened to defile all of their daughters by forcibly applying vermilion to their upper forehead and in the central part of their hair—a still acceptable way of obtaining a wife by capture. Rather than submit to such a marriage most of the Santal fled Champa.[15] Thus Santal mythology defends solidarity in the face of the emulation and Hindu social claims of some of its leaders.

Nevertheless, the defeat of the Santal rebellion of 1855–57 appears to have led to increased Hinduization, perhaps in part because the path to higher rank through military force seemed closed. Soon after the rebellion the Kherwar movement developed among the northern Santal. Those who joined this Hindu-

[14] Bodding 1942:10.
[15] Bodding *ibid.*

539 own sept. The bride may be of any sept, provided the young man is of a different one". Then they lived on; living in this way a very long time passed, and they multiplied exceedingly.

Thereupon they went to Khọj kaman[13]. Living there mankind became very bad, they became like buffaloes and buffalo-cows, they did not respect each other. Seeing all this Ṭhạkur became very angry, and he firmly made up his mind to destroy mankind, if they did not return to him. So he called them to come: "Come, mankind, come back to me". But they did not heed his word. Therefore Ṭhạkur called to him whether it was Pilcu Haṛam and Pilcu Buḍhi or another holy pair (some people say that Pilcu Haṛam and Pilcu Buḍhi died in Hihiṛi Pipiṛi) and said to them: "Mankind does not listen to my word; therefore I will make an end of them. But you two go into the cave in the Harata mountain; there you two will be saved".

These two listened to (obeyed) Ṭhạkur's word. They went into the mountain cave. When they had gone in there, for seven days and seven nights Ṭhạkur let fire-rain (some gurus say, sky-rain) stream down from the sky and destroyed mankind and animals, every one of them, only the two who were in the Harata mountain cave were saved and left alive. About this they sing:

Seven days seven nights fire-rain,
Seven days seven nights uninterruptedly,
Where were you, you two human beings?
Where did you two find shelter?

It is there, it is there the Harata,
It is there, it is there the mountain-cave;
There we were we two,
There we two found shelter.

Then it cleared up; when it had cleared up the two human beings were coming out from the cave; then they saw a buffalo-cow that had fallen down there. Thereupon they found a cow; this one was pressed down under a halfburnt big log; one side of the cow was burnt and stripped off, and one side was whole. They sing:

Glowing cinders, the cow fell under the log,
Pulverized ashes, the fallen down buffalo cow.

[173] [184] [13] Some gurus mention a number of different countries where the ancestors stayed for "who knows for how many years" (as they express themselves). From Hihiṛi Pipiṛi they went to Hohoro Bombero (also called Haharo Bombero, by some); from there to Ayaro Payaro, then to Jhạl daḷ (lit., long water); from there to Dudumul, and then to Aero Kaeṇḍo; from there to Haradata and then to Khọj kaman. Some gurus do not mention Jhạl daḷ and enumerate from Dudumul to Ajodana, thereupon to Haradata, to Khọjkamọl, thereupon to Sasan boḍa and then to Aero Kaeṇḍo; from there to Jạrpi and from this country to Cao Campo. Again others mention the countries in the following order: Ayaro Payaro, Dudumul, Ajodana, Jhạl daḷ, Aero Kaeṇḍo, Haradata, Khọj kamọl and through Toṛa Pokhori Baba Bandola to Cao Campo.

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The words of the ancestors are ended. I learnt from Buku guru in the village Pabea in the Paṇḍra country, and I have made you two, Kersp Saheb[1] and old Jugia my disciples. As you two have become gurus, make disciples in the country, in order that the words may not be lost; may they remain generation after generation.

We Kersp Saheb and Jugia haram of Citragaria in Nankar have written down the words of the ancestors that our guru old Kolean finished telling us on the 15th February 1871, in accordance with the original paper.

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The old guru is no more; therefore we here below write a couple of matters that were not written at that time: The twelve septs of the Santals were in Campa again divided, every sept into twelve subsepts. Santals cannot marry one of their own sept, and not their mother or aunt or wife of mother's brother or father's sister, nor the children of these. As in Campa people of the Kisku sept and of the Marṇḍi sept became at enmity with each other, they do not intermarry even now, and because people of the Ṭuḍu sept and of the Hāṁsa sept became at enmity there, they do not contract marriages up to this day. Even if they join them together by force, they do not get on together.

Benagaria, the 6th August 1867.

L. O. Skrefsrud.
Jugia haram.

[1] The Santāli corruption of Skrefsrud Saheb.

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XIII. ADDITIONAL ACCOUNT BY OLD JUGIA

Because of the harassing of the Dekos and the distress through lack of food after we had crossed the Ajao river, we were, as time passed, spread about towards the North and the East, on the hills in the North East right up to the Ganges river. At that time there was only forest, and here and there Bhûiyas[1] and on the hill tops Mar Munḍas[2]. The Munḍas they also call Mâurias. The Bhûiyas and the Mar Munḍas were the landowners at that time. They allowed us to take up land in peace, and they took a very small amount of rent from us. Under them we had no distress at all. But as time passed, the Dekos entered trading, and finally they settled down as money-lenders. They also became the money-lenders of the landlords. The landlords borrowed money and clothes from them and gave the country to them as security. In this way the Deko money-lenders got the country from them by fraud, they themselves became the landlords, and the real landlords became paupers and became like us. The Deko landlords living at the foot of the hill country also took possession of what belonged to the Mar.

We cleared the hill country and the forest country at our expense for the new landlords, after they had become money-lenders, and they gradually increased the land-rent for us. The money-lenders give us very small amounts, and they take very much. The crops of the year they take away from us, all of it, and we get through life by again incurring debts with them. However much we pay back, still it is not cleared off. If they are not satisfied with the crops of the year, they drive our cattle away; and if they are not content even by this, they make us, wife and children, serve with them as slaves for a couple of half-seers (of rice). At that time there were no magistrates; to whom could we complain? Afterwards Deko police came in; but these dismiss our cases, taking the white pice of their own race. We had very great distress. With the whole country we became bewildered.

Then different rumours arose. First this: The two Leg Legin[3] snakes are coming; they will swallow people. To remove the adverse influence men of five villages gathered and walked about to five other villages, during one night, being religiously very abstinent. To our village those of five villages came, one man to every separate house. In the village

[1] A semi-Hinduized caste, living here and there near the Ganges. [2] A Dravidian tribe living on the hills in the northern parts of the Santal Parganas. [3] Leg Legin, a Bengalized form of Nag Nagin, a pair of frivolous snakes.

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street outside the house of the village headman they danced round, drumming the kettle-drum. At their waist they had tied wooden bells and small metal bells. As they were swaying, these made an awful noise. Two young unmarried men had taken on the sacred thread of the twice-born, and they were carrying about two very small ploughs, on to which sindur had been smeared, these were of Nim and Bael and put into a small flat basket. When they had finished wandering to their five villages, they gathered us of our five villages in the open plain outside the last village. There they offered Bael leaves, sun-dried rice, and oil and sindur in the name of Lag Lagin. After this they that were coming along taught us songs, before they left; then having put the sacred thread of the twice-born on two unmarried young men of ours and having handed the two ploughs to them, they went to their respective homes. Thereupon we also in the same way wandered round to five villages. When we had finished wandering we gave the two ploughs over to the people of the five villages that we had wandered round to; we turned the sacred thread of the twice-born to two unmarried young men of theirs; we offered in the name of Lag Lagin, and having taught them the songs we came home. When we had reached home, we men plastered the courtyards with cow-dung, and we brought one large vessel with water. Our women, that is to say, mothers of children, did not put their feet down on the ground during the whole night that we were away; they had put cow-dung down near the bedsteads, and putting their feet on this they sucked their children.

After this they again started a rumour, viz., that women who had got the same number of children should exchange vows, two and two; the pair should give each other clothes, and all should eat and drink. Who knows for what reason. Perhaps in order that all should become related and then be of one mind, so that if an insurrection or the like arose, they should not tell tales about each other, and if anything happened, it might remain hidden.

Those two rumours went round. Again one other matter was rumoured, viz., a buffalo-cow is coming. Where she may find grass in the village street outside somebody's house, there she will graze and lie down. She will not get up until the people of this house have all died. Hearing this the people of the whole country dug their village streets clean.

Then a rumour about the Doms was started, viz.: In the Ganges river a Dom touched a golden boat, thereby the boat sank, therefore they will kill all Doms. Fearing this the Doms were running about like forest deer; they put on clothes and ornaments like Santals, and stayed in Santal houses.

Then it was rumoured, viz.: In the Layo fort a Subę[4] has been born by an unmarried girl; let all people go there to hunt. The Layo fort[5] is to the west of Hazaribagh. Some men went; they saw the Subę and together with him they also hunted through the Kanchon forest. They brought the deer they had killed together to the same place and cut them

[4] Subę (or Subę Thakur) is used about an inspired leader. [5] The Layo gaṛ was far to the West from the places where most of the insurrection occurred.

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up. And the people brought with them one leaf each to receive their portion. They counted these leaves; they saw how many thousands country people had come together. The Subā paid all the expenses. When we were about to disperse, the Subā said to us: We shall hunt over the Tīr mountain, that is near to Deoghar; assemble there. But for some reason or other they did not hunt there.

After this it was rumoured, viz.: Some people, who knows who, are coming to kill the Dekos. As for you, at the end of the village street hang up the hide of a bullock and a pair of flutes, that they may know that you are Santals; otherwise they will kill you with the others. Fearing this we hung these things up in every village.

Then it was heard, viz.: In Bhognadi in the Par country[1] a Subā Ṭhākur has appeared. Hearing this the people of the country commenced to go, each taking with them one half-seer of sun-dried rice and the milk of one cow. There they saw that they had built an altar, and that they had put up a fence round it. In the middle Ṭhākur was sitting in the shape of Sido of that village. Throwing themselves down on their face before him the people of the country worshipped him, and they brought rice and milk together in his name at the same place. Then a police head-constable from the courts came. He said to them: What order have you? out with it, I wish to see your authority. Then Sido said: Look here is my authority, and with a clasp-knife he killed him. Then the insurrection commenced. When they heard that they had killed the head-constable, the soldiers came. At the Kōpara market place they fought against Sido and his brother Canhu and the country people. The soldiers were vanquished; therefore the courage of Sido and Kanhu and their party greatly increased. Then Sido and Kanhu gave an order: The landlords and usurers we shall kill every one of them, and the other Dekos we shall drive away to the other side of the Ganges; the reign will be ours. Then the people of the country became raving mad; many Subā Ṭhākurs appeared.

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Now there happened fighting at Pakaur and Mohespur; here also the soldiers were vanquished. After this Māni Pargana from Jamelpani and Ram Mānjhi from Barcenasia in Nankar became Subā. With a host of the country people these two plundered Naranpur and Moluti. Binud Mānjhi from Tilabani in Belparia became a Subā, and with a host of country people he plundered Deocha and Gunpura. At Gunpura the Santals were vanquished. Thereupon they had a fight at the Nangolia police station. There a great number of Santals were killed. From there they fought at Laubaria on the other side of the Mor river. Here a great many soldiers fell, and a European also was killed. And Santals were shot dead in heaps. The Santals could not prevail; the Santals ran away into the Saptala forest and the Satbehar hill. Here they remained for about two months, in the months of Asin and Kartik (from the middle of September to the middle of November). Here the

[1] Most of the places mentioned by Jugla may be found on the large maps of the Santal Parganas. The Par country is in the north-eastern part of this district.

[131]

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Santals plundered each other, because of the distress through lack of food. Thereupon the Europeans surrounded us; they drove us out, and to the villages Sikarpur and Ramkhuri.

Us men they caught and took every one of us to Dhanuia, the village of the landlord, that is to say, so many as they caught. Having kept us here for something like one month they brought us to Kumrabad near the Mor river. At that time the Europeans cozened us, they said to us: Why will you suffer? Tell who the Subę are; then we shall set you free now this moment. Then the country people told who they were. The Europeans caught the Subę; some of them they hanged there, and some they transported to an island[7]. A few they also set free. Sido had in the meantime died in the fighting, and Kanhu and his followers they caught afterwards. They hanged Kanhu and a couple others, and some, who knows how many, they transported to an island. Ram Mańjhi and Binod escaped. The Lieutenant Governor came and pacified us the people of the country; we returned to our respective villages.

During the insurrection we suffered severely. From Asar (middle of June to middle of July) for fully three months we lived in the hills at the foot of trees; rain was continually pouring down on us, and we were nearly dying from hunger, because of the guiles of the Subę Thakurs. During the insurrection many of us lost our cattle; therefore when we returned to our villages, we suffered much distress. There were no plough-cattle, there was nothing to eat, and the Dekus mocked us very irritatingly. We had again to fall into the hands of the same money-lenders. Some people unrighteously became rich during the insurrection by unlawfully taking possession of other people's cows and buffaloes.

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From after the insurrection the Europeans have appeared in the Santal country. First Telbor Saheb was our magistrate. At that time he judged our cases without charging money, but nowadays much money has to be paid in court-cases: the writers take a couple of rupees, the muktiar (pleader-babus) take earnest-money in advance, stamps have to be put on, and if the orderlies are not given a little, they push you straight away when you come, and if you do not go and have trouble three-four times, the case is not settled. This we feel a distress; otherwise the Europeans judge well.

[7] I. e. the Andamans.

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539 Menak' menak' Harata ho,
Menak' menak' buru dander ho.
Onareliñ tahèⁿkana àliñ do,
Onareliñ sorolen.

This may be roughly translated as follows:—

For seven days, nights seven,
it rained fire and fire.
For seven days and nights seven,
rained water in floods.
O Ye men! Where ye then?
Where did you shelter take?

The reply sings:—

Behold there is a mountain called Harata,
Behold there is a cave therein, where we hid.
And therein, therein we escaped unhurt.

• 173 At Harata,[1] a new generation sprang up, a race of good men and women. And in course of time they multiplied in large numbers. Then they migrated to Sasañ beḍa, the plain of turmeric. Here [614] they separated into five more clans than they did at Hihiṛi Pipiṛi, viz. Baske, Besra, Pàuṛia, Còṛèⁿ[2] and Bedea (now extinct). So altogether, like the Israelites there were now twelve clans of the Santals.

1. Risley spells the name as Hara.

[114] [104] 2. The spelling adopted by Risley is "Chore". The Mayurbhanj Census report (1931) p. 192 Vol. 1 spells it as "Chane" but the Santals were heard to pronounce it in a manner more akin to Risley's transliteration of the name.

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This early migration of the Santals is reflected in the following folk-song:—

Hihiṛi Pipiṛirèbon janamlen,
Khòj kamanrèbon khòjhen,
Haratarèbon haralen,
Sasaṅ Bedarèbon jàtena ho.

The sense of the stanza may thus be rendered into English:—

We were born in Hihiṛi Pipiṛi,
We were sought in Khòj kaman,
We increased in numbers in Harata:,
And divided in clans in Sasaṅ beda.

Thus forming themselves into clans, the forefathers of the Santals came to a land called Jàrpi.[1] But they could not stay there. No reasons can be assigned for this, but the fact is, they had to leave. They roamed from jungle to jungle finding out their way. At last they reached a big mountain. Here, they were at a loss to find out the pass. They were too much fatigued with the long, long journey. They discussed among themselves, "The hill-god must have shut the way for us. Let us pray for his favour; it may be, he may listen to our entreaties."

It was time to be morning and the sun to rise. But the Santals were groping in the darkness,

1. Jàrpi—where is the great mountain Maraṅ Buru, through which they could not pass.

S. Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1942
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539 tantalised by the curious behaviour of the sun. And
• 173 they prayed, "O thou hill-god (Maraṅ Buru), if thou wouldst let us pass, we shall offer thee worship for the rest of our lives, when we have settled down somewhere. Do please show us the way, O God of gods!" A yell of delight was heard. The god had listened to their prayers. The sun rose revealing a path for the wanderers. The early Santals named the path "Siñ-duàr" (*shut-door*).[1]

The Santals have a couplet about this phenomenon in their journey which means that from the land of Jàrpi, they came to Siñ-duàr and Bànih duàr (exit).

173 It took a long time for the Santals to cross the mountains. And then, they after much trouble came to the country of Aere. Then they came to Kaende. They stayed long at Kaende, but for reasons now unknown, migrated to Cae. Here also they stayed for a long, long time and for many generations. They multiplied by leaps and bounds. But they could not stick to the place. So they came to the land of Campa, the land of seven rivers. This country had two gates, one was called Caeduàr, the other Campaduàr. To protect themselves from

1. Siñduar—they found a pass leading into a country called Abiri where they dwelt for a time, passing into Kendi, Chai, and finally Campa. (Risley, *People of India*, App. VIII, page clvii).

their enemies, the Santals built many forts at Campa. 173
The one named Khàiri gaṛ belonged to the Hèmbròm clan. Koeṇḍa gaṛ fort was meant for the Kiskus. The fourth fortress, named Badoli gaṛ, sheltered the Màrṇḍis, while Sim gaṛ was occupied by the Ṭuḍus.

The early Santals lived at Campa for many generations. They became a great people there, and were independent of others' control. Their kings belonged to the Kisku clan. The Murmus were the priests. They were called Murmu Ṭhàkur. The Sòrèn clan supplied the warriors. Their profession was fighting only. Hèmbròms were "Kunàr" (the nobility, according to well-informed opinion). The clan known as the Màrṇḍis were rich men. They were the money-lenders. The Ṭuḍus worked as the musicians and smiths of the tribe, while the Baskes were the traders. The duties of the other clans are now forgotten.

The sojourn of the Santals at Campa is important for the fact that here they began to worship the various tribal deities. We hear that they built shrines in sacred groves situated at the end of the village "kulhi" (lanes) and began to worship Maraṅ Buru (*big-mountain*, the chief presiding deity), Mònṛènko (*fives*) and Jahèr era (*old-woman*). Siñ-Boṅga (*the sun-god*) was worshipped every fifth year at sun-rise. 173 776 [778]

Jt Mukherjea Lib. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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173 At this time, say the old Patriarchs, Ram Chandra, the mythical king of the Hindus, as we read in the Ramayana, was reigning. We hear that 173 648 some Kharwars[1] accompanied Ram Chandra's expedition to Lanka, to help him in his fight against the demon king, Ravana; and so, the Santals had peace with the Dekos (*non Santals*) for a long time. [192] The Santals inhabited the jungles, while the Dekos (*non-Santals*) used to live in the plains. But in later times there was frequent friction between them.

Even now, the Dekos are considered as thorns by the Santals. They say that when the Santals reclaim a forest, Dekos come to snatch it away. They regret that the English helped the Dekos during the Mutiny (*the Santal Insurrection*); otherwise the boundary of Santal lands would have been the Ganges.

173 539 The Santals assert that in days long gone by, their positions extended on both sides of the Ganges. There is a song about it: —

Gaṅ nàni dò pèrèc'ena,
Soṛa nàni dò coṛañena:
Do ja miru, ruàṛme.

1. The forefathers of the Santals, as we shall learn later, called themselves "Kharwars." (Cf Kherwal, Mayurbhanj).

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Cele ñèlèteñ ruàṛa ?,
Gateñrège jiviña,
Saṅgañrège satahedeña.

Nàjiñ namar gosàne ho,
Gaṅ nàni dò sèkè sèkè ;
Nàjiñ namar gosàne ho,
Soṛa nàni dò doro botolo.

Nàjiñ namar gosàne ho,
Teñoalaṅ sutàm gànàri ;
Nàjiñ namar gosàne ho,
Galaṅoalaṅ ràṅki janalom.

Nàjiñ namar gosàne ho,
Jhàlialaṅ sòlè nicàk ;
Nàjiñ namar gosàne ho,
Gàrialiñ bale màṅgori.

The sense of the above is thus given in English :—

The Ganges has swollen to the brim, Soṛa river is in ebb-tide :
Go back my son, go back to your country own.

Semi-chorus answers :—

Why, for whom shall I go back ?
My soul is in my friend,
My breath is in my brother-in-law.

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Others sing : —

Lo, lo my elder sister,
The river Ganges rises,
Lo, lo my elder sister,
The Soṛa river's full of water.

Semi-chorus : —

O my elder sister,
Let us have a net.
O my elder sister,
Let us catch fish.

Semi-chorus : —

O my elder sister,
Lobsters shall we catch.
O my elder sister,
Let us gather *balemàṅgori* fish.

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648 While in Campa, it is said the Dekos (non-Santals) defeated the Santals and took possession of Campa Gaṛ. But in the second battle, they were worsted and the Santals got back their fortress.

The Santals have a song in conversation between the two Deko brothers who led the battle and their sister, as regards the loss sustained by them. We hear that the names of the Deko brothers who fought were Indan Siṅ and Mandan Siṅ.

The sister sings: -

Dadarè Indan Siṅ Mandan Siṅ,
Dadarè chuṭalòṅ Campa ka gaṛ.
Bàhinge na kando, na khijò,
Bàhinge hate ka sàṅka bicòṅ ;
Bàhinge kane ka sona bicòṅ,
Bahinge tao hona lèbò Campa ka gaṛ.

The above is roughly rendered as following: —
O brothers, Indan Siṅ and Mandan Siṅ.
O brothers, we lost Campa gaṛ.

The brothers said in reply :—
O do not cry, do not cry, O our sister dear.
Campa gaṛ shall we conquer back,
By selling your bracelets and ornaments of ear.

The Santal sojourn at Campa is also noted for a serious civil war between the Kisku and the Màrṇḍi clans. There is also a song describing the fight: —

Beret', beret', beret'mè sè, gateñ ho,
Cirgàl, cirgàl, cirgàlmè sè, gateñ ho,
Kòeṇḍako mapak' gòpòc' kan.

Beret', beret', beret'mè sè gateñ ho,
Cirgàl, cirgàl, cirgàlmè sè, gateñ ho,
Badoliko nèṅpèṅt' gòpòc' kan.

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Cete làgit' mapak' kana, gateñ ho,
Cete làgit' gòpòc' kana, geteñ ho,
Cete làgit' nènpènt' gòpòc' kan ?

Simà làgit' mapak' kana, gateñ ho,
Ḍàṇḍi làgit gòpòc' kana gateñ ho,
Ḍàṇḍi làgit' nènpènt' gòpòc' kan.

The above folk-song may thus be rendered to bring out its sense:—

First stanza:—

Get up, get up, O my friend;
Watch, watch, O my friend.
Look here, the *Kòeṇḍas*[1] are killing.

Second stanza:—

Get up, get up, O my friend;
Watch, watch, O my friend.
Look here, the *Badolis*[2] are killing.

Third stanza:—

The friend in reply asks:—

What are they fighting for, O my friend.
What are they killing for?
What are they destroying each other for?

1. Kòeṇḍas—Kiskus.
2. Badolis—Maṛṇḍis.

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Fourth stanza:—

For land are they fighting,
For boundary are they fighting,
For homestead are they fighting.

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Here an explanation is forthcoming as to who the Kharwars were. We have already seen that some Kharwars are said to have accompanied Ram Chandra, in his fight against Ravana of Lanka (Ceylon). Now the Santal traditions say that upto the period the people were at Campa, the Santals, Birhors, the Mundàs and Kurmbis (Kurmis)[1] were called Kharwars. The Birhors were outcast because they ate the flesh of monkeys, considered as their taboo.[2] At Campa, the Mundàs were gradually separated and the Kurmbis gradually adopted Hindu customs.

We hear that some Kharwars entered into matrimonial alliances with a section of the Hindus known as Siùs. Gradually their descendants became known as Siùs. They founded kingdoms. Some Birhors also became Siùs.

It is narrated that in ancient times one of the Siùs lived as man and wife with a daughter of a

1. A Santal can now even marry a Kurmbi girl. They are now found more in Hazaribagh, Manbhum and Purulia. [582]

2. The Santals of Mayurbhanj said that they never ate monkeys. [262]

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173 829 Kisku Rapaz (King) and a son was born in a forest. The child was found by the Mârndis who adopted him and named him Mandô Siñ. The child grew up to be an infant terrible. He surpassed every one in knowledge and battle and later became the chief officer of the Kisku Rapaz. One day he asked the king for a bride to marry. But none would give him his daughter to marry. Mandô Siñ grew furious and threatened, "If they do not give me a bride, I shall take to wife each and every girl" (by forcible application of vermilion or red dust on her forehead).

Hearing this the people became frightened. The greater portion of the population left the country, the remainder only stuck to their properties.

From Campa, the forefathers of the Santals came to a place known as Tore Pokhori Baha Bandela. There they remained for a long time. Somehow or other, the Dekos also came with the people over there.

Here it is that the sojourners fixed their religious rites and ceremonials. We learn that they gathered under the shades of a "tope sarjôm" tree [a tree of the "sal" (*Shorea robusta*) variety] by the side of a spring and sitting on lotus-leaves, began a long discussion to fix the details of their customs. We hear [846] [796] that they decided to observe the ceremony of *Narta*, performed three or five days after child-birth, and other ceremonials connected with marriage and death.

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Here they cast aside many of the customs of their forefathers, but no explanation is forthcoming at this date as to why they did so. Henceforth, their customs resembled those of the Hindus more and more. We learn that in ancient times, the Santal forefathers did not burn their dead, nor did they carry the bones of the dead men to the Damodar river for being consigned in its holy water. Previously, they buried the dead men. But all these were changed here. In marriage, the Hindu custom of applying vermilion to the forehead of the bride was henceforth adopted.

Next, the early Santals came to Icàk' buṭà (under the shade of a tree named Icàk'). As the womenfolk crossed the bog and gathered under a *mòhua* tree they were struck with wonder to find that the lotus-leaves they had trodden under their feet and the marks of *arta* (equivalent to Hindu *alta*, a red pigment applied by the Hindu women to dye the sides of their feet) were absolutely undisturbed and intact. From this strange phenomenon they were convinced that they had done the right thing in changing the customs and resolved that they should henceforth stick to the changes.

The early Santals lived at Icàk' buṭà for a long time. But, as before, they migrated. The reasons are again uncertain, some ascribing it to the fear of the Turuks. As they were passing on, they found

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• 173 a grassy field called Bàri badwak' [Dr. Campbell says that it means a common grass. (*Panicum Colonum*, [262] L.n.). The seeds are eaten during scarcity of food]. Then they crossed a forest and found themselves on the plains of Jona Jòspur. From this place they came over to Khàspal Belaoñja.

Here, they scattered themselves in many directions as they chose. Some went to Sir, some to Sikhàr, while others to Nagpur. Thenceforward, [177] [648] the Santals were, to a greater extent, under Deko (non-Santal) influence. They could preserve their independence only by contracting matrimonial alliances with the Hindus. They are no longer called 101 173 Kharwars. Here an explanation as to why they are called Santals, is forthcoming; for there are some who say that as they lived for some time in the country of Sànt,[1] beyond Sikhàr, they are called Sanotar[2] (*Santal*).

1. Sant = The Santals of Mayurbhanj according to the [175] Census report of 1931, were called Kherwals or Kherwars (Santals Puritan) before they settled in the country round about a place called Saont in Midnapur. P. 151. Risley (*People of India*, App. VIII) says that Santals ruled here for 200 years.

2. From Saont, Risley adds, "Again pressed by the [177] Hindus, they wandered on under a Raja called Hambir [648] Singh to the eastern part of the Manbhum district near [167] Pachet. Here after a while their Rajas adopted the Hindu religion and set up as Rajputs, so that at the present day they intermarry with the family of the Raja of Surguja.

Here the Santals became the tenants of the king of Sikhàr but we hear that the Dekos seized their lands and property and drove them away. It is at Sikhàr that the Santals learnt how to observe the *Chatapòròb'* (one of Santal festivals). From Sikhàr some of the Santals came to Ṭuṇḍi near Dhanbad.

The Santals regard stability as the biggest of their tribal problems. Their forefathers exhorted upon them not to cross the river Ajoy, but they had to go against their wishes for the sake of bread. And in course of time they have found themselves in the Santal Parganas. With a characteristic naiveté, the Santals say that like the caterpillars

But the people would not change their religion, so they left their chief to rule over the Hindus, and wandered on to the Santal Parganas where they are settled now."

People of India, App. VIII, pages clviii-clix. Risley has some reflections on the origin of the name "Santal." He says that according to Mr. Skrefsrud it is a corruption from "Saontar" and was adopted by them after their sojourn for several generations in the country about Saont in Midnapur. Before they went to Saont they were said to have been called Kharwar, the root of which, *khar* is a variant of *hòṛ*, 'man', the name which all Santals use among themselves. Col. Dalton expressed a doubt whether the name of the place may not have been taken from the tribe, "a doubt strengthened by the discovery of a small tribe of Saonts in Surguja and Keonjhar." Risley does not think the point of importance as the Santal always now calls himself "mañjhi."

1. Chata-pòròb = Observed in Mayurbhanj on the 11th day (Dwadasi) before the Bhadra Purnima (full-moon in the month of Bhadra, Aug-Sept).

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167 they are advancing, grazing and eating. But still they have not yet been extinguished from the face of the earth. They do not know where they will go next. Some have crossed the Ganges. It is not known why Thàkur (*the Creator*) is punishing them in this way.

128 114 We consider that it will be instructive at this stage to refer to the traditions as collected and commented upon by the previous antiquarians so that our story of Santal genesis and migration may be examined in the light of these.

114 167 Mr. E. G. Man, one of the earliest writers on the Santals,[1] quoting the opinion of Mr. Sutherland, Joint Magistrate of Monghyr, (1817) refers to the "Sonthars who emigrate (in the Santal Parganas) from the Beerbhoom and Ramghar district, and even from the Nagpur territory." An old [173] Santal told him that they came from "Chai Jumpa" in the Nagpur district, and their migrations were due to the oppressions of a "Mahadeo Singh". [101] They first called themselves "Shaitals" which was gradually corrupted into "Sonthars." Now they are known as Santals. Some of them say that they were originally "Kerwars."

[113] 1. Ref. *Sonthalia and the Sonthals*, E. G. Man, page 11.

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calling "Thàkur Jiu' as "Dhòròm". Nabin Mañjhi, Headman of Chamardahani, Muruda, explained that Dhòròm is the Creator of the world according to Santal belief. Being asked if the deity is worshipped at present by the Santals, he replied that Dhòròm is invoked during all marriage ceremonies with offerings of pure water and nothing else. Closely questioned as to whether the god had any shape or form, he answered that he had none and was 'nirakar' (*formless*). Secondly, the Santals of Muruda led by Nabin Mañjhi gave us some additional information as to how the first parents prepared the first drink. This was what they did. Gòròm baba asked them to grind grass-seeds and later directed them to bring the water from a fountain called *tatijhari*, by drinking which the monkeys became drunk as it washed the roots of a plant named *rànu ran*.' [A plant of the name exists in Mayurbhanj and is extensively used in the preparation of hàṇḍia (*rice-beer*)]. Then these two substances were mixed together to make the drink of the first parents. Thirdly, we have seen in the foregoing account that the Santals, while at Hihiri Pipiri were divided into seven clans and it is only after their migration from Sasan beda that they

1. Ranu—The ferment used in the manufacture of rice-beer. Ran—drug (Dr. Campbell).

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added five more. The Mayurbhanj Santals did not agree with this, although it tallies with the account of Risley.[1] They said that all the clans were formed together and narrated a story to support their contention. According to them Pileu Haram and Pileu Budhi had twelve sons. All of them went for a hunt and after returning, some asked their mother for water, others for food. The mother saw that each of her sons had brought a particular article along with him. Henceforth, their respective clans were formed accordingly. Thus the son who had brought home a "murum," (*a horn-less animal, Nilgae or blue cow, Portax picta*) came to be known as Murmu. Màrṇḍi was named so because he ate the husks of corn, Hansdak' because he had killed a wild duck. The name Ṭuḍu came from the wild-fowl, Besra from wild-buffalo, Pànuria (*called Copeyàr in Mayurbhanj*) from wild-pigeons, Còndowar from dàṇḍkà-hako, a kind of fish, and Còṇṛèn from a lizard. Of the rest *Baske* derived his name from the *baske*[2] (fermented rice) he had eaten and Hèmbròm, because of a fruit he had brought (said to be *tiril*, Oriya *kendu*, a fruit like mangosten). No explanation was forthcoming as to how the Kiskus and Sòrèns

1. Risley, *People of India*, App. VII, page clix.

2. Baske = left over from the previous meal, fusty, stale, unfinished. (Campbell's dictionary).

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derived their names. About them, the Mayurbhanj Santals added that Kisku did not bring anything, while returning from hunt. He was the eldest, so he was known as Kisku and was their tribal chief, whlie Sòrèn became his orderly. Gòndwar did not go to the hunt at all, so he was considered as the worst of all the clans.

Risley does not think that the story of the wandering of the Santals deserves serious consideration "neither as a record of actual wandering, nor as an example of the working of the myth-making faculty."[1] Considering how from the same data Mr. Skrefsrud tried to prove that the Santals came from the North-west and Col. Dalton from Assam, he concludes that both the hypotheses are untenable. Continuing he says,[2] "If, however, the legends of the Santals are regarded as accounts of recent migrations, their general purport will be found to be fairly in accord with actual facts. Without pressing the conjecture mentioned above, that Ahiri pipri may be no other than pargana Ahuri in the north-west of Hazaribagh district, it is clear that a large and important Santal colony was once settled in the parganas Chai and Champa in the same district. A tradition is noticed by Col. Dalton of an old fort in Chai occupied by

1. Risley, *People of India*, App. vii, p. clix.
2. Risley, *People of India*, App. viii, p. clix.

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one Jaura, a Santal Raja, who destroyed himself and his family on hearing the approach of a Muhammadan army under Sayid Ibrahim Ali alias Malik Baya, a general of Muhammad Tughlak's who died in 1353. This tradition, so far as it refers to the existence of a Santal fort in Chai Champa, is to some extent corroborated by the following passage from the legends of the southern Santals collected by the Rev. J. Phillips and published in Appendix G to Annals of Rural Bengal ed 1868: "Dwelling there (in Chai Champa) they greatly multiplied. There were two gates, the Ahin gate and the Bahini gate, to the fort of Chai Champa." If, moreover, the date of the taking of this fort by Ibrahim Ali were assumed to be about 1340 A.D., the subsequent migrations of which the tribal legends speak would fill up the time intervening between the departure of the Santals from Chai Champa and their settlement in the present Santal Parganas. Speaking generally, these recent migrations have been to the east, which is the direction they might *prima facie* have been expected to follow. The earlier settlements which the Santal traditions speak of, those in Ahiri Pipri and Chai Champa, lie on the north-western frontier of the table-land of Hazaribagh and in the direct line of advance of the numerous Hindu immigrants from Bihar. That the influx of the Hindus has in fact driven the Santals east-ward is beyond doubt, and the line which they

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are known to have followed in their retreat corresponds on the whole with that attributed to them in their tribal legends."

Rev. P. O. Bodding[1] however is inclined to give due weight to the traditional origin of the Santals. Summing up the whole position he opines that the Cae and Campa of Santal myths are to be found in Hazaribagh and on the Chotanagpur plateau, where they lived about 600 years ago, and gives it as his conclusion that a study of Santal traditions and their language makes it likely that they reached this place from the west (south-west); and it is not improbable that about two thousand years ago they were on both sides of the Ganges west of Benares.

We would conclude this chapter with a reference to the myths of the other Munḍà tribes to see if any side-light may be obtained on the early history of the Santals. Now, speaking generally, there is a good deal of resemblance between the traditions of the Munḍàs, the Santals and the Khaṛias, which makes the conclusion irresistible that they belong to the same stock. We have seen that the Santals say that upto the period the people were at Campa,[2] the

1. *Bengal Districts Gazetteers*, Santal Parganas, Vol. XXII, pp. 92-95.

2. Campa = According to S. C. Roy, (p. 100, footnote) Campa was also the old name of Bhagalpur and its political boundary "may be stated as extending from

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Similarly, Khâiri gar of Santal tradition may perhaps be identified with Kheri-garh or the fort on the hill at Kheri, ten miles to the south-west of Bhagalpur.[1]

Secondly, the Munḍâ traditions corroborate the story of a struggle with the Kharwars, in tune with the Santal myth on the point. The reason for the attack was the refusal by the Munḍâs (or by the Santals according to Santal tradition) to bestow the hand of one of their girls on the son of Madho Singh Kharwar. The tradition of the Kharwars also affords corroboration to this tradition of the Munḍâs and Santals.[2] According to Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy, this fight took place while the Munḍâs and Santals were at Rothasgarh "without doubt the Ruidasgarh of Munḍâ tradition." Next, he suggests, one branch of the Munḍâ tribes such as the Korwas, the Asurs, the Birijas, and the Kisanrs, appear to have followed the course of the Koel river till they reached the present districts of Palamau and Ranchi, while the Munḍâs and the Santals crossed the Sone and marched on in a south-easterly direction along the border-land that separates the present Hazaribagh district from Palamau and Ranchi (Nagpur of Santal and Munḍâ tradition).

1. Ref. *The Munḍâs and their country*, Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy, p. 100.
2. Ref. Do Do p. 110

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173 167 648 Now the Santals and Mundàs parted company. The Santals left Nagpur (Chotanagpur), crossed the Damodar and settled down in Sikharbhum (the modern district of Hazaribagh) and later on, followed the course of the Damodar and passed on to Manbhum[1] and to the Santal Parganas, while the Mundàs preferred to remain in the forest-covered regions of what is now the Ranchi district.[2]

175 167 *Historical Basis of Santal Migration in the Santal Parganas*[3]

The history of Santal migrations does not however remain conjectural in the 18th Century, as we have authentic records to go upon. These will show that whatever their original habitat might have been, they were settled in the Chotanagpur plateau and in the adjoining districts of Midnapore and Singhbhum, and that they began to move to the north towards the close of the 18th Century.

[101] In 1795, we find them described as "Soontars" living in Ramgur (Ramgarh), a "rude and unlettered

1. The Santals of Mayurbhanj when questioned by us as to whether they were autocthonus in the place replied that they came from Sili Sikhar, some from Manbhum, while others from Dhalbhum. They asserted that Mayurbhanj was not their original seat.

2. Ref. *The Mundàs and their country*, S. C. Roy, page 111.

[113] 3. With acknowledgements to the *Dt. Gazetteer*, Santal Parganas, Vol.XXII. pp. 95-99.

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In Other Places

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167 As regards the historical basis of Santal migration in the rest of their present settlements, the references in official records point rather to their migratory habit than to any exact date of any settlement. Thus the District Gazetteer of Manbhum (1910), speaks of its Santal population, "A large part of the present population (Santal) springs from families that have been established in the district for four generations or more, and it is perhaps open to doubt whether their establishment in this district was not earlier in date than in the Santal Parganas." The Gazetteer of Birbhum, 1910, repeats the story already mentioned that the Santals migrated to Birbhum towards the close of the 18th Century "being brought to clear the jungles and drive out the wild beasts." As far as Midnapore is concerned, the Gazetteer (1910), refers to the date of Santal settlements in the district as "unknown" but adds "their traditions relate that they came to Saont in course of their wanderings *several centuries ago* (*Italics are ours*)." There is a similar reference to the migratory habits of the Santal in the Gazetteer of the Feudatory States (1910), which mentions that the Santals came to Keonjhar from Singhbhum, Mayurbhanj and Chotanagpur, and on our own enquiries at Mayurbhanj, the Santals said that some came to the State from

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to be the most prominent. Any one glancing through a Santali dictionary will be struck with the vocabulary bodily assimilated by the Santals from the current dialects of Bengal, and any one listening even to their folk-songs will notice that a large number of them are really in Bengali. We marked it even in the heart of Santalia, the Santal Parganas, when we heard a Santal woman humming, "Panch takar ghati bati chore laia gela" (*My pots and bowls worth rupees five have been stolen by thieves.*)[1]

Santali itself is a peculiarly expressive language so far as natural objects and things concerning the common life of agriculturists. But when it comes to the expression of things spiritual or the common ideas of modern civilization, it has got to fall back on the speech of the neighbours.

It is not, however, a written language and their traditional legends are orally handed down. The question of a Santal script engaged the attention of the early European Missionaries and they used the Roman script. It is due to their efforts that a large number of books have been written in the Roman script and the education imparted to Santals in the

1 The missionary in charge of the Dharampur district (S. P.) tells a story that while he was there with his wife, a Santal tried to explain that it was useless for them to teach Santali, as they knew the language well enough and pressed for Bengali or Hindi. (*Annual Report of the Santal Mission of Northern Churches* 1934).

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3. *Kisku*

According to tradition, as we have already seen, the Kiskus were the kings of the Santals (Kisku Rapaz). All Kiskus are only glad to admit it and the rest of the clans do not contradict the story. And we come across such expressions as 'Kisku Raj' as current coin with them. At Mayurbhanj, however, none could throw any light on the sub-clans of the clan nor upon their totem. All that we could gather was a myth about the traditional warfare with the clan *Màṛṇḍi*, with whom up till now the Kiskus can have no inter-marriage.

Explaining the genesis of the clan quarrels, Prodhan Nabin Mañjhi of Muruda said, "Once a Kisku Raja married the daughter of a Màṛṇḍi. He went to bring his wife from his father-in-law's place. But the Màṛṇḍi won't allow her to come with her husband. Then the Kisku Raja took by force a good horse belonging to the Màṛṇḍis, as his own was quite useless. At this the Màṛṇḍis attacked the Raja, who in his turn abused them. Now the Kisku fled to the Sòrèns and related his story, seeking their help against the Màṛṇḍis. Next, with their aid the Kisku Raja fought against his enemy and winning the fight left for home." But what became of the wife, he could not say.

This story, corroborated at Udla, ended with the conclusion that the Kisku did not take his wife home.

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men passing under their names had learnt the art. 754
They furiously denied that they had come overnight 539
and were the more perplexed to see their special signatures on *sal*-leaves. "The marks are ours but they are forged," they protested..... All could easily guess who had tricked them thus. Marań Burn in his anger said, "The women cheated me too as if I were a child. Put your own marks, I shall see these women."..... Then the deity taught them the craft [756]
of the Witch-doctor as a counteracting factor to the Witch-craft learnt by women.

So it is, the early fathers of the Santals say, 754
that there has been going on a ceaseless war between 756
the Witches and the Witch-doctors known as *Ojhas* 791
and *Jan gurus*. But in the tussle, the exorcists are [776]
frequently worsted because the witches ally themselves with the *Boṅgas* (evil-spirits) by bribing them with all the sweets of life. It is no wonder therefore that wrong persons are sometimes mentioned in the Witch-doctor's "Tel-pat" (*a sal*-leaf, moistened with oil), where the real self of the Witch ought to be reflected, and innocent persons are named therein by the witches in collusion with the evil-spirits.

The Santal traditions say that Witch-craft and [173]
the cult of the Witch-doctor are attributed by some to 'Kamru-Guru' i.e. people versed in the arts at Kamrup, whose disciples the early Santals became.

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SANTAL PARGANAS

They would recall that in their traditions and institutes it was clearly stated that the early Santals (known as *Kharwars* then) had helped Ram Chandra to win the battle of Lanka against Ravana. In huge Santal rallies (held to declare themselves as Hindus) such speeches were heard, "Sri Ram Chandra used bows and arrows as we do. Sri Krishna was dark like us and played on the lute and tended cattle as we do. Why are we not Hindus?. We are." One irresistibly felt that here was the heart-throb of the Santal for centuries.

All these synchronised with a new awakening amongst the educated and enlightened Santals which culminated in the formation of organisations to maintain their social and political interests. One such, the *Hor Malto Marang Sabha*, was formed as early as 1932 on the initiative of E. S. Hoernle, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner of the Santal Parganas. In course of time, it exerted a real influence on the government and the tribal people. The part that it played in safeguarding the rights of Santal tenants of Monghyr in the Bihar Tenancy Act was a creditable one as it secured his right against the disposal of his holding to *mahajans*. Gradually, however, a political programme came to the fore and such a bias was noticeable in the Adibasi Mahasabha, soon to follow at Ranchi. It sought to unify, at least the Proto-Australoids like the Santals, Mundas, Kharias, the Ho etc. in a

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When I saw the jet-black people, with a necklace of white beads about their necks, and their peculiar dress, if dress it might be called, I was more confirmed in my opinion. I immediately alighted from my horse and inquired if that was a village of the Coles, but was not a little surprised at being so soon transported from the Oriyas to a people who could not understand a word I said. I looked about with astonishment at the romantic change, till at length I found an old man who could speak broken Oriya, of whom I gained the following information. He said they were not Coles, but Santals."[1] The author of the *Annals* relied largely on information supplied to him by the Rev. Jeremiah Phillips, who was a pioneer in the study of the language. The following occurs in the Annual Report of the mission for the year 1846: "During the past year Brother Phillips has acquired some knowledge of the language of this people (the Santals), by which he has been able to commence efforts for their improvement, which it is believed will result in great good to this hitherto neglected portion of the inhabitants of Orissa. He has performed a journey of some two or three weeks among them, which was very serviceable and interesting to him. He has published a tract of 8 pages, which is the first work ever published in the Santal dialect."

The Santals have been living in South-West Bengal for at least three hundred years. It is probable that they have been there for about five hundred years. There is agreement among the authorities that they moved to their present sites from the more hilly districts of Chota Nagpur farther west. It has been computed that the village of Rangibari in Bankura district is over three hundred years old.[2] Such a long period of residence on the one site is exceptional; the great majority of the Santal villages of today cannot look back on so long a history. Wherever a tradition regarding the founders of a village has survived, one finds that the first settlers moved to their present abode from no great distance away. Regarding Barikul, we are told: "The one who tied the brown hen here was Haru Mañjhi, whose family came first from Aurasuri in Bogri—a distance of about thirty-five miles. They say that formerly there were many wild elephants in Bogri, and for fear of the elephants many of the inhabitants fled to other parts. Soreṇ and Haru

[1] This and the following quotation I owe to the kindness of the Rev. A. A. Berg, who enabled me to see early reports in his possession.

[2] M. C. McAlpin, *A Report on the Condition of the Santals in the Districts of Birghum, Bankura, Midnapore and North Balasore*, IV (20), Bengal Government, 1909.

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Sorup and Haru Mañjhi were two brothers. Sorup Mañjhi left Bogri because of the elephants, came to Raipur and settled. He had established himself well at the end of a year or two, so he told his younger brother: 'Leave Bogri, where the elephants are on the increase. Some day you will be trampled on and killed. Come with me.' Haru Mañjhi thought to himself: 'True enough, many men have been killed; perchance they will kill me.' Thinking thus, he took all his children, left Bogri and came to Raipur. From Rautora in Raipur they established a village in Barikul, Sorup Mañjhi saying to his brother: 'Go to, brother, put up your huts and stay at Barikul.' Then Haru Mañjhi went out with his children, his cattle and his goats, and built his huts there. He had four boys and two girls; the girls they brought with them from Bogri, and the four boys were born in Barikul. He obtained sons-in-law for his daughters to live with them, and one or two tenants came together. In this way the village increased to many houses." Wild elephants, of which there are not so many now as formerly, do still on occasion cause great damage to ripening crops. Barikul was founded five generations ago, a period of about one hundred years. At that time there was also a possibility that by moving his abode the Santal could regain a measure of independence. The Santals have been spoken of as formerly "nomadic".[1] It may be that in the strict sense of the word they were in some remote period nomads. For any period of which we have record, however, they have been agriculturalists, though food-gathering and hunting provide them with important subsidiary occupations. Their migrations have been due to pressure of one kind and another. They prefer to move to forest lands where they will have a hard struggle to establish new settlements than to remain where they have to defend their holdings and their livelihood against hostile forces, whether these be wild animals, malignant actions directed against individuals or the community from the unseen world, or the oppression of landlords and moneylenders.

The last cause operated to produce a great northward movement in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and finally goaded them into rebellion. The Santal rebellion has been frequently described.[2] It took place in an area remote from the Bankura district, but it has to be mentioned because it created

[1] P. O. Bodding, *Bengal District Gazetteers: Santal Parganas*, ed. L. S. S. O'Malley, Calcutta, 1910.

[2] J. H. Hutton, *Modern India and the West*, ed. L. S. S. O'Malley, Oxford, 1941. Chapter on the Primitive Tribes, pp. 417-44. Also bibliography.

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up for non-payment of the accumulated debt, which by then was a considerably larger sum. They were thus compelled to make new agreements with their landlord at an enhanced rent and with inferior rights. The later passage of legislation has done little to lift the burden of despair about the future which is an unhappy characteristic of Santal life today. Such incidents explain in no small measure the cry of the heart which is heard from time to time: "Give us back our land." It is some consolation that the Act of 1918, followed by legislation during the last twenty years aimed at improving the status of the peasantry in Bengal, has brought to a close some of the worst chapters in a long and sordid story.

The community life of the Santal centres in his village, and is so organized as to make common action inevitable in social, economic and religious affairs. The houses are built on either side of the village street, which must be left wide enough for two bullock carts to pass each other. This street extends from east to west, the eastern end being known as the upper end. The houses, set close together, have their main door opening on to the village street, and each household is responsible for the state of the road outside its own residence. It is here in the village that the Santal learns how to live; here he is initiated into the traditional loyalties of the tribe, and the village of his birth exercises a deep influence over him all his days.

The village headman, or *manjhi*, is the man of greatest consequence in the community. The post is hereditary, and it passes ordinarily to the eldest son of the former headman. When the direct line of succession fails through lack of sons or from incapacity on the part of the natural heir, the office passes on to a brother or near relative on the paternal side. The history of the village is preserved in the tradition handed down concerning the headman's ancestry. For example, at Sarenga they tell a story of the three brothers who were the founders of the village and divided the village offices between them. Among them Lokhon has acquired the greatest measure of renown, and he is commemorated by a shrine outside the present village. The story is told that he died suddenly, and before the news of his death had spread through the village his spirit took possession of a young man sitting in the courtyard of a house some distance away, and through him Lokhon told the villagers that they were to make a special shrine for him. There is a ceremony at the beginning of each new year which suggests that at one time the appointment of the head-

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different kinds of rice fields are Bengali. Maize, a cereal that is important in their economy, has a borrowed name, but other lesser cereals retain their Santali names. In Bankura the Santals have lost the use of their own numerals beyond seven, though apparently these are known and commonly used elsewhere. Even so, in Bankura the Santal word for "twelve" is still used in phrases connected with the recital of tribal traditions, as in the phrase *gélhar paris*, meaning the "twelve clans". Iron has a Santali name, but other metals now in use, such as lead, copper and brass, have Bengali names. In addition to brass and earthenware utensils, the Santals make extensive use of the leaves of the *sal* tree (Santali *sarjom*), which they plait to form many varieties of plates, cups, pipes and cigarettes, and they possess a wide vocabulary to distinguish between the different kinds. Brass and earthen pots they buy from others.[1]

The difficulties of determining the extent of their borrowings in the field of religion may be illustrated by the fact that the language of spells and of prayers offered at the time of sacrificing contains a strong admixture of Hindi-Bengali words. This would seem to indicate that there have been many borrowings at this point; but it is also possible that the one who makes the prayers, wishing to put himself into a favourable relation with the spirits, uses a special vocabulary and so removes himself from the common run of his people when he is acting as a mediator between them and the spirit world. Many of the songs sung nowadays are composed in Bengali. There is a large stock of riddles, some of which are asked and answered in Santali, others of which are asked and answered in Bengali, while yet others make use of both languages.[2]

Only incidental reference has been made to the impact of Moslem culture on Santal life. Reminiscences occur of the period of Moslem rule, such as the following statement: "Concerning the *Turuk* (*Turuk*, or Turk, the name by which Santals refer to Moslems), it is said that they ruin our spirits because they cut the throats of fowls the wrong way. If we eat

[1] Another discussion of the linguistic evidence, giving many examples, and the whole stated from a somewhat different point of view, is to be found in Professor Sten Konow's introduction to Bodding's collection of Folk-Tales.

[2] In a suggestive article published in *Africa* for June 1949, Professor F. C. Bartlett has expanded his thesis in the Julian Huxley lecture of 1944 that each primitive culture displays both "hard" and "soft" points. The methods which he has outlined for determining, in the examination of any particular culture, what constitute the hard and soft points, and in particular the story method, may furnish valuable results when applied to the study of Santal culture.

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the food of the *Turuk*, rice or other food, the spirits will run away. If anyone has fever or if we want to exorcize a spirit, we try to give him curds made by a *Turuk* to eat. They say that in olden times one Mirza Turuk drove us from the country we were in. On a certain plain we made ready twelve carts and fled away across the open country. Mirza Turuk searched and could not find us. He thought: 'I must search for the tracks of twelve carts.' However, as we drove the twelve carts one behind the other, we made only one track, and so he never found us." The local Moslem population is very small[1] and confined to one or two villages of weavers and cultivators, who are themselves deeply affected by the Hindu environment. No doubt the story is very different in those districts of Northern Bengal where the Moslems predominate, but even there the great dissimilarity between Moslem and Santal culture probably militates against influences passing from the one to the other.

Christian influence, the result of a sustained and conscious effort on the part of missions, is considered later. Of deliberate efforts to Hinduize the religious practices and beliefs of the Santals the area is ignorant.

NOTE TO CHAPTER 2

The relation of the aboriginal peoples to Hindu society has given rise to much controversy and discussion in India, not all of which is conducted in a spirit of scientific inquiry. An able presentation of many of the facts dealt with in this and the previous chapter, together with much else, and written from the Hindu standpoint, can be found in *The Aborigines—"So-called" and Their Future*, by G. S. Ghurye, Ph.D. (Cantab.), published by the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, 1943.

[1] The figures given for the local Moslem population in 1931 were as follows:

	Males	*Females*
Rajmahal Thana	238	190
Raiganj Thana	158	478

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9.	The one who killed a rough-necked iguana	Cõṛẽ
10.	The one who killed a dove	Pạuriya
11.	The one who killed a bushy-haired monkey	Ḍonka or Bhaḍuli
12.	The one who restores us to tribal status	Murmu

After dividing the clans, *Pilcu Haṛam* and *Pilcu Buḍhi* questioned their daughters and their sons thus: 'Who are you?' The daughters said: 'We are grown up, we can carry pots of cold water on our heads.' The sons said: 'We are hard and strong, ploughs made from the *rot*[1] tree and sticks made from the *hesel*.' "[2]

539 The above narrative is a literal translation of the original. A comparison with other recorded versions shows that many incidents have been omitted, including some that must have been familiar to the narrator. He has made no reference to the story of a great rain of fire in which all except the first pair of human beings perished. The references made to the chief tribal deity of the Santals are almost incidental and do not include the story of how he first introduced himself to *Pilcu Haṛam* and *Pilcu Buḍhi* as their "grandfather" and taught them how to make rice beer, whereupon they became drunk and lost their innocence. The story as here presented does, on the other hand, relate the myth in clear fashion to the clan organization. The name of the Santals' original abode is usually given as Hihiṛi Pipiṛi; Holhelo Popelo may be a local variant. The account given of the early wanderings of the tribe is much abbreviated, but serves as a reminder that they are accustomed to living in and near forests and their ancestors were driven by want from one place to another in what they now consider was a rather futile manner. There have been some attempts to find an historic basis for the names of the localities mentioned in the traditions,[3] but without confirmatory evidence from other sources it has not proved possible to put forward any satisfactory explanation.

• 1913
614 The ancient story becomes real for the Santals of today at the point where it deals with the clans. It is worth noticing

[1] A forest tree, *Ougeinia dalbergioides*, Benth. A hard wood.
[2] A forest tree, *Anogeissus latifolia*, Wall.
[3] Cf. P. O. Bodding, *District Gazetteers: Santal Parganas*.

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It is worth noticing how the number "twelve" recurs in the traditions. Periods of twelve years are mentioned and twelve clans are named. Santal tradition is unanimous in talking of twelve clans, but there is little agreement about the names of the twelve. Santals using the clan suffix Ḍonka are unknown at the present day; local tradition says that they have changed their clan because of the odium attached to the murder of a monkey and the fact that they were reputed by some to sacrifice and eat monkeys. The conjecture of the narrator that the Ḍonka took the name of Bhaduli cannot be accepted. Two families in the area are known to have adopted the name Bhaduli, but they are members of a sub-clan of the Mạrṇḍi. One of the Bhaduli could relate little or nothing about the myths of his clan, but he remembered a song that celebrated an old quarrel between the Mạrṇḍi and the Kisku in which the former are referred to as Bhaduli and the latter as Koinḍa. The Bhaduli observe the same taboos as the rest of the Mạrṇḍi. P. O. Bodding gives the name of the lost clan as Bedea,[1] a title that is not known in the area. The great interest that Santals themselves take in the determination of these matters was well illustrated by a lively correspondence initiated by a number of educated Santals and carried on for some time during the year 1944 in the pages of the weekly paper *Pẹṛa Hoṛ*.[2]

The clans are exogamous and, with two exceptions, the members of one clan may marry a person belonging to any of the other clans. The first exception to the general rule prohibits a marriage between a Mạrṇḍi and a Kisku because of the quarrel in which these two clans were involved. The second prohibits the marriage of a Ṭuḍu and a Besra. The story behind this taboo was thus related by a member of the Ṭuḍu clan: "All twelve kinds of Ṭuḍu were exceedingly fond of dancing and singing, and they used to dance twelve dances in a single night. Well, one day two of the Ṭuḍu made a plan. Across the river from where they lived some girls of the Besra clan were engaged every day in grinding rice, and the youths thought to themselves: 'Tonight we shall get them out to dance the whole night through.' When they reached the river they found that it was in flood, and so they began to wonder how they would be able to get across. They walked along the bank looking out carefully till at last they found a creeping plant that stretched right across the river, its roots being on this side, while it was

[1] *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. IV, p. 596.
[2] Official organ of the Santal Mission of the Northern Churches, Dumka.

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614 held fast in a tree on the farther side. They crossed over by
•173 clinging to it, and then they began the dance, which did not finish before cockcrow. Just before they were due to return home someone from the village cut the creeper, but not so that they would notice it. They had their dancing-drums and their kettle-drums slung round their necks, and they were swinging over on their way home when suddenly they fell into the river. Now, the Besra girls were seven in number, and they had placed some fish traps into position farther down the river; as the two youths were being swept away they became caught in the fish traps. They became entangled in the trap that belonged to the family of the youngest of the Besra girls. Her six sisters became very annoyed at this and said: 'No, we shall take them. You are the youngest, and you should not be married while your elder sisters remain unmarried.' When the Ṭuḍu youths heard all this quarrelling they became very annoyed and said: 'From today we shall never marry a Besra girl.'"

Another version of the origin of the clans bears rather obvious traces of the influence of the surrounding culture by dividing them on an occupational basis after the analogy of Hindu castes. According to it, the Murmu became the priests, or Brahmins, of the tribe; a hint of this is found in the list given by Durlob Murmu, who places his own clan twelfth in the list and describes it as the clan of "the one who restores us to tribal status". The Soren were the warriors, or Kshattriyas: hence the addition to their name of the epithet *sipahi*, or "sepoy". The Mạrṇḍi were traders, the Kisku were *rajas*, the Ṭuḍu were drummers, and so on. This version, now widely current, is probably of comparatively recent date and may have arisen out of the need to compensate the Santals, or at least certain of the clans, for their low social status in the eyes of their caste Hindu neighbours.

614 The totemistic basis is very clearly marked, and in certain directions it still exercises a powerful influence on the habits of the Santals. The Hāsdāk' are always named first and they are the original clan. Their name is related to the goose and gander
614 of the myth, from which the first human beings were born, and
262 they do not eat either goose or duck. There can be no doubt in this case that descent from the totem animal is envisaged. On one occasion a member of the Hāsdāk' clan replied in answer to the question why they did not eat goose: "Because they are our brothers." Although presumably all Santals as well as the rest of

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the human race are also descended from the first pair, the prohibition against eating goose or duck flesh does not apply to the others. Some of the other clan names are either the same as that of the totem or are closely related to it. Mạrnḍi is the name of a weed that is common in the rice fields; Soren is the name of the constellation Pleiades, though there appears to be no knowledge of a myth connecting the two; Ṭuḍu certainly suggests the sound made by drums; Hembrom suggests *hotrin* for deer; Kisku is not unlike *kikir*, a generic name for kingfishers; Baske is one of the words that mean "stale rice", and Murmu suggests *murum*, the buck of the traditions whose flesh the Murmu do not eat. On the other hand, it is not possible at this date to explain all the names by this type of association.

Tradition says that each of the twelve clans, or *paris*, are divided into twelve sub-clans, or *khūt*. The myth about the Ṭuḍu refers to "all twelve kinds of Ṭuḍu". At the present day in the case of most of the clans there are in fact many more than twelve sub-clans. These sub-clans do not affect the rules governing marriage outside the clan. Some of the sub-clan names are found in more than one clan, and while it is unusual for the member of a sub-clan in one clan to marry a member of the corresponding sub-clan in another clan, there is no absolute barrier preventing such marriages. Inquiries made in the Santal Parganas[1] led to the tabulation of two hundred and seventy-seven different sub-clans distributed among the eleven known clans. Many of them are found under more than one clan. All those which are common to more than one clan are found also in the Bankura district, but some of the other names are unknown there, while others that are found in the Bankura district do not seem to appear farther north. Each of the sub-clans possesses a distinctive myth and also customs that differentiate it from the others, while the same is of course true of the clans. These customs affect life at many points. Apart from marriage, the taboos determine in some cases the type of ornaments which may be worn, the type of houses that may be built, and the kinds of food which must not be eaten. They are also linked with the worship of the spirits, for there are special clan and sub-clan sacrifices.

In each clan there is a division that is taken to have been the original sub-clan, the word *Nij* being prefixed to the clan name. Here, for example, is an account of the Nij Mạrnḍi: "They are

[1] J. Gausdal, "The Khūṭ System of the Santals", *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, 1942.

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one of the original twelve *khût*. They are not allowed to have spots made on them and they will not be vaccinated, but they may be cicatrized; however, their daughters and sisters are not allowed to be tattooed until after they are married. The unmarried men are not allowed to wear any garment made from jute. They must not plaster their houses with any other than white earth; and they may not draw any pictures on the walls except plantain trees and date palms or figures that look like pictures of temples, drawn with three fingers only. They make their sacrifice at the time of the *Sohrae*; this is performed in the house, and they sacrifice a pig. One year it must be a male uncastrated pig and the next year a female, and if for any reason they cannot get hold of a pig they may sacrifice a black hen. "They should sacrifice to their sub-clan spirit in the shelter of a white ant hill,[1] but in these days they bring some earth from the ant hill into the house and sacrifice there."

In a Sarenga schoolboy's essay on the origin of his own clan, he began by relating the creation of mankind and finally continued: "All the Sorens were the soldiers of the Kisku, who were the owners of the village at Campa Gar. The Marndi lived at Cirunala, and between the two villages there flowed the Sitanala river. They began to quarrel with each other because the people of the two villages had to use the same river for bathing and for drinking water. Now, since the Soren were the soldiers of the Kisku, they are like the Gurkhas of Nepal. Just as the Gurkhas are fierce and do not fear death, so too the Soren." So is virtue inculcated by fostering pride in the clan. One of the sub-clans of the Soren is the Poita Soren. *Poita* is the word—as pronounced by the Santals—for the sacred thread of the Brahmin. They relate that in the very early days the ancestors of the Soren were celebrating the *Jom Sim* festival and some of the company began to prepare the food and cook it. In imitation of Brahmin cooks they put on sacred threads and served all the people. From that time they became known as Poita Soren. When they sacrifice to their sub-clan spirit they sacrifice to him alone, and the offering has to consist of a male uncastrated pig. The rite is performed at sunrise. They may eat the flesh at any time during that day and the following night, and if they are unable to finish it they must bury it before the following sunrise

[1] *For references to the sanctity of white ant hills see Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, by W. Crooke, C.I.E., p. 380. The belief is widespread in India. "From early times the earth from an ant hill has been regarded as specially pure, representing 'the savour of the earth', and it was, and is, used in building altars."

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in the dung heap. Another Soren sub-clan is known briefly as the Sidup' Soren, and the name is connected with a custom followed when they are making their sub-clan sacrifice. The man squats on the ground in the courtyard of the house holding before him a sheaf of paddy. Meanwhile his wife squats nearby with her back to her husband. He passes the sheaf over his head to his wife, who receives it with her hands lifted above her head and takes it into the house. She may not perform this service if she has formerly been the wife of another man and is either a widow or has been divorced. The women of this sub-clan cannot wear a *campa*[1] flower in their hair.

There are two stories current concerning the origin of the Cilbinda Hāsdāk', or the Hāsdāk' who killed a kite. One of them states: "In the days of the early ancestors many very wonderful things used to happen. At that time kites were causing a great deal of trouble throughout the countryside. Every day they used to snatch away not only men's chickens but also the grown fowl, and in addition they used to take kids, young pigs and children. In this way they were the cause of much sorrow to men. Seeing this state of affairs, one of the Hāsdāk' brothers who was working out in the fields hid behind his clod-crusher and shot a kite through the hole in the middle, and from that time his family got the name." An even more suggestive version is more widely known. An old man belonging to this sub-clan told the story thus: "Formerly our ancestors fell into great difficulties. They were engaged in transplanting rice seedlings and had plucked them from the seedling beds, but there was no rain and so they could not proceed with the transplanting. Now, there was a kite perched in a tree adjoining the field. They shot it, and the blood moistened the land so that they were able to carry on with their work."

The claim to belong to the original sub-clan is made by many people belonging to various other divisions. Binu of Tantidanga made this claim for the sub-clan to which he belonged. He was a Jihu Hāsdāk' and he used to say: "They were the first of the lot." The name is derived from the fact that while their ancestors were hunting in the Khandarae forest they ate the flesh of the *jihu*[2] bird. Since that time they will never eat it, nor will they touch anything that is deep blue in colour, lest people say that they are touching the blue eggs of the jihu bird.

[1] *Ochna squarrosa*, L.

[2] There are two kinds of birds so named. The *Ikhonda jihu* is the Bengal Babbler, *Malacocercus terricolor*, and the *Janum jihu* is the green Babbler, *Chalorius striatus*.

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they are touching the blue eggs of the *jiñu* bird. The Hāsdāk' do not even touch a goose, and they will not take water from a tank in which geese or ducks are swimming at the time. Binu used to say that he had to perform four different sub-clan sacrifices. To two of the spirits pigs were sacrificed in the cowshed at the time of the *Sohrae*, to another spirit they sacrificed a goat in the house at the end of the *Sohrae*, and to the fourth they sacrificed a ram on the open land outside the village at the time of the Spring festival. The Kaṛwar Hāsdāk' tell the story of how long ago their ancestors were celebrating the *Jom Sim* festival and all the Hāsdāk' were present. They had performed the sacrifices and everyone had been served with rice and meat, but some of the younger folk present felt that they had not been given enough to eat, so they killed a buffalo and served that as well. The family of the one who slew the buffalo, or *kaḍa*, became known as Kaṛwar Hāsdāk'. They sacrifice a pig, a white hen and a brown hen at the time of the *Sohrae*; the rite is performed inside the house at sunset, and they must finish eating the flesh during the night, burying whatever is left over in the dung heap. The Hatibari[1] Hāsdāk' sacrifice either a white hen or a ram to their sub-clan spirit. This should be done out in the open beside a white ant hill, but, like some others, they now bring a piece of earth from the ant hill into their cowshed. Like the Nij Maṛndi, of whom this is also true, they may not be vaccinated, but their womenfolk may be tattooed.

The Jihu Hāsdāk' are not allowed to brand their cattle. There seems little reason to doubt the fact that most of the clans use distinctive marks in branding their cattle. Bodding has affirmed of the *dhera dag*, or cross, that although it is used as a mark of ownership of cattle "it is not restricted to any sept or sub-sept".[2] (The word "clan" has been adopted in this book in preference to "sept".) In the Bankura district, however, many of the branding marks are definitely associated with the clans, and the marks correspond to those recorded by Charulal Mukherjea in Mayurbhanj.[3] The marks printed on the opposite page have been noticed in Bankura.

The Guṇ or Betel nut Hembrom constitute one of the most numerous of the Hembrom sub-clans. Of them it is said that "a few days after the ancestors had been divided into clans, one of the Hembrom was born at the foot of a betel nut tree. When he

[1] Literally "elephant house", but the name may refer to a locality.
[2] *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. II, p. 174.
[3] Charulal Mukherjea, *The Santals*, p. 77.

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grew to manhood he became a very important person and his sons were known as Guạ Hembrom. From that time they gave up the chewing of the betel nut. The women may wear any kind of *sari* and they may wear shell bracelets. They do not eat eels. It is said that their ancestors were great traders, and once upon a time when they were going on a trading expedition they were halted by a flooded river. At that an eel ferried them over the river on his back, and since then the Guạ Hembrom will not eat eels. They sacrifice pigs at the *Sohrae*, also one white and one brown hen." Another member of this sub-clan was able to throw further light on the origin of the name: "We are Guạ Hembrom, and this is how we got our name. During the first wanderings, one day while the ancestors were out in the forest a child was born at the roadside. They wondered what they could find to tie

Rot Mạrndi - //

Hembrom - +

Nij Murmu - ⊻

Ṭika Murmu - ||

Sidup' Soren - ʔ

round the waist of the new-born child in place of the string. It was growing dark, so they quickly cut down the stem of a creeper, not knowing what it was, and bound it round his waist. Next morning they say that there was a betel nut on the end of the stem, and so the Guạ Hembrom began." The Nij Hembrom, like others already noted, perform their sub-clan sacrifices in the cowshed at the time of the *Sohrae*, with a piece of earth from a white-ant hill for the altar. It is set up in one of the corners. Another of their sacrifices is performed in the same month and has certain unusual features. No preparations may be made until after the sun has set and all the participants have already taken their usual evening meal, including the one who will perform the sacrifice. The rite is performed outside the village on a site that has been smoothed and plastered with cowdung. The person officiating draws a circle on the site with a paste made from flour and water. In it he first offers a red hen

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and then a ram. The blood is placed in a vessel and fixed on the ground, surrounded with small stones. Only men may eat the meat of the animals sacrificed. The girls of this sub-clan are not allowed to wear Bengali-style *saṛis* or shell bracelets at the time of their marriage, though they may do so after they are married. When the men of this sub-clan are bringing brides to their home they present them with a *haṣli*, the neck ring, made of brass.

A whole range of the sub-clans is known as *Sada*, or "white". They may represent a reforming element, for their characteristic is a revolt against the use of red vermilion paint. When the first ancestors of the Sada Hembrom, so it is said, were going to perform a sacrifice they thought that they had with them all that they needed, but when they reached the spot where the sacrifice was to take place it was discovered that they had left behind their supply of *sindur*, the vermilion-coloured earth that plays a large part in the Santal cult. When they saw this they completed the sacrifice without the *sindur*, and since then their descendants have been known as Sada Hembrom and they have continued to observe the custom so carelessly begun! In other ways, too, they have abjured the use of vermilion. They make no use of it in the marriage ceremonial, though once their daughters are married and have become members of other clans they may put vermilion in the parting of their hair. The cloth which is a part of the presents given at the time of marriages must be white without any border, and their womenfolk are limited to plain cloth throughout life. The same pattern of behaviour applies to all the Sada sub-clans. The Sada Hāsdāk', along with some other sub-clans, when they perform their sub-clan sacrifices, first of all model a scorpion out of paste made from flour and water and offer it before going on to offer a hen, then a pig, and lastly a goat. This particular sub-clan has to eat all the flesh of the animals sacrificed and they are not allowed to throw any part of it away.

Some of the Murmu sub-clans are restricted in the type of dwelling-house that they may build. The majority of Santal house roofs are constructed on what is known in Bengal as the "charchāla" plan. This consists of a thatch that slopes up from each of the four walls of the house. The main beam is set well above the four walls, being smaller than the length of the house, with four corner beams fixed two at each end of the main beam and going down to the four corners of the house to form the first stage of the framework on which the thatch rests. Most of the Murmu, however, have to build up the two end walls so that

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the centre forms the apex of a triangle. The main beam rests on these walls with rafters sloping from it down to the other two walls. The resulting roof has only two thatches, sloping to the front and the back of the house respectively. The Gar or Fort Murmu are able to provide but little information about their origin, but they maintain their distinctive tradition in the matter of the sub-clan sacrifice. It is performed during the month October-November out in one of their own rice fields. The one sacrificing has to observe the customary abstinence of priests during the previous night, and the sacrifice takes place just after the sun has risen in the morning. A circle of flour paste is made on a spot levelled and cleaned for the purpose, and a larger circle of white stones is constructed round it. All who are going to partake of the flesh have to remain within this enclosure. First of all they sacrifice a black hen, which can be eaten by men only. Next they sacrifice a pig, the flesh of which may be eaten by the women as well. After this they sacrifice a white hen and finally a brown hen, and again it is only the men who may partake of these. The gathering and the attendant feasting last through the whole day, and they return to their houses at nightfall, leaving no food. They believe that some misfortune will fall on them if they have not finished eating while daylight lasts.

There is a sub-clan of the Ṭuḍu known as the Kāṛā or Blind Ṭuḍu which is accounted for in the following way: "The first Kāṛā Ṭuḍu placed a torn cloth behind the fireplace in his house. In the evening when his wife went to cook she found the cloth there and cooked the supper herbs wrapped up in it. Then the man who had put the cloth down came to look for it, and not seeing it behind the fireplace he asked his wife if she had seen it. 'Yes,' she replied, 'it must be the one in which I wrapped the supper herbs.' They raked out the fire and the ashes and saw that she had in fact burnt that cloth."

Many of the points that have been raised in this chapter cannot be understood apart from matters that are dealt with in subsequent chapters. The stories have been gathered together in this way in order to bring out the fact that in the clan system of the Santals and in the myths that form its background there is a key to the understanding of nearly everything that is distinctive in their way of life. The clan organization regulates their behaviour within the tribe and their dealings with the spirits. They accept its rule without question, and so long as they live in closely knit village communities this system, with its manifold implications, will continue to control their lives.

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and in fact it is used extensively as a storeroom, particularly for stacking the bundles of reserve rice. Any man may pass through this opening, but no woman may do so unless she belongs to the family living there. The daughters of the house are debarred from going into the *bhitar* after they have married. After marriage a woman belongs to her husband's family, and this prohibition is one of several that are enforced with a view to ensuring that she shall not bring calamity on her husband's house by continuing to have dealings with the spirits of her father's home. She has to remove herself from their influence. Within the *bhitar* dwells the house spirit, and it is also visited by the ancestors of the family. There offerings of food and beer are made to the immediate ancestors. In certain instances sub-clan sacrifices are made in this inner room. The names of the spirits to whom the sub-clan sacrifices are made are kept secret. The knowledge of these names is handed down within each family from the father to the eldest son or other heir, and under no circumstances should it be imparted to others. An instance was reported of a man who was in deep distress because his father had died without his having had an opportunity of learning the name of the *ahge*, as this spirit is called. He hoped to learn the name from one of his father's brothers, but this person also died before he could pass on the information. Shortly afterwards his dead uncle appeared to him in a dream and revealed the name, and he confirmed the correctness of the information by visiting yet another uncle who knew the secret. This story shows that the rules of silence are not too strictly observed within the family circle. Women are not allowed to learn the name, and in most cases they are excluded from participating in the sacrificial meal. The same prohibition applies to sons-in-law, though one of the Soren sub-clans is allowed to leave a portion of the food from the meal for their sons-in-law. When they summon them to eat, however, they address them as they would the household dogs, which emphasizes their separation from the family and from the sub-clan.

Some features of the Santal cult, as well as an indication of the ways in which it may develop, can be illustrated by a description of the shrine that stands on the outskirts of the village of Sarenga. This village was at first a Santal settlement, but it is now a place of nearly two thousand inhabitants, most of whom are Bengali Hindus. The present-day Santal inhabitants number barely one hundred, but amongst them are some who claim descent from the founders of the village, who lived,

so they say, nine generations ago.

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so they say, nine generations ago. One of the first settlers was one Lokhon Mañjhi. Just before he died he had been paying a visit to the *boiga than*, probably the sacred grove of that day. It occupied a site that is now taken by the landlord's rent-collecting office and has quite disappeared. He returned home, sat down on his string bed to have a smoke, then suddenly fell over and died. Almost immediately, and before the news of Lokhon's death had passed through the village, a young man in the courtyard of a house belonging to Lokhon's paternal aunt became possessed. He announced to the assembled company that he was Lokhon and that they must make a sacred place for him. They chose an old banyan tree to the north of the village. This tree has long since disappeared, but its place has been taken by an *atuak'* tree, which serves equally well. The fact that the village has become largely non-Santal means that the sanctity of this particular shrine is recognized by people belonging to many different castes, and its reputation has grown with the years. All the offerings there are made by the Santal priest in the village, a man who is descended from Lokhon. He is also the local Santal headman and combines the two offices in one person; such an arrangement is not unique and seems to have been adopted often in places where the Santals are living surrounded by other communities. He and his predecessors have adapted themselves to the new situation, and so this shrine, now utilized by many non-Santals, is still served by a Santal priest. Every market day people from the surrounding villages come to offer sacrifices, to ask a boon, or to leave their thank-offerings of money for blessings that have been granted. Some of the more unscrupulous of the local inhabitants defy the spirits by hanging around and picking up the coins left by the devout.

At the base of the tree is the shrine, formed by a raised earthen mound on which there are many burnt clay effigies of horses and elephants. In front of the mound a narrow path has been cleared for about eight feet, so that the tree is approached from the west, the direction in which all the effigies are facing. This path has been cleared through a jumbled heap of innumerable small clay animal effigies that have been left at the shrine by devotees in the past in the performance of their vows. Here there were many opportunities for watching the priest at work, and the chief impression that stands out is the dignity and reverence with which he performed his tasks. On a particular Thursday in 1941 he first of all cleared a small space at

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across the axe edge, then held it so that the blood should pour on to the parched rice, after which he flung away the body of the pigeon with his left hand and placed the severed head with the parched rice. The hen was sacrificed in exactly the same way. He then rose to his feet for the sacrifice of the goat. This was of necessity a more elaborate proceeding. A little way off from the shrine, to the south-west, there stood a "killing-post" with a cleft at its upper end. The goat's neck was forced into this cleft, and it was secured with rope. Its owner held the goat firmly, clasping its front legs and securing them by drawing them up and backward over the goat's back, and the priest severed the head with one quick stroke of the axe. Immediately and with great speed he took hold of both the head and the body, so that the blood might drop on to the parched rice. This completed the offerings for the day, and he gathered up the heads of the animals and his other possessions and took them away in a small basket.

This Sarenga shrine affords a good example of the way in which Hinduism can take over the customs and use the beliefs of those who are not, strictly speaking, within the fold, but in spite of the eclecticism here apparent there is a point beyond which the Santals of the village will not go in accommodating themselves to Hindu society. The *Mokor* festival at the end of *Pus* is celebrated by all the lower Hindu castes of the area as well as by the Santals, and at Sarenga it is accompanied by a gathering near this shrine, when many different people, including the Santals, take part in the stick dancing. On the other hand, in 1930 a proposal made by the local Hindus of influence roused great indignation and had to be abandoned. A Santal couple from the village who had previously been baptized were persuaded, as a result of a mission by an agent of the Arya Samaj, to renounce the Christian faith. It was proposed that they should undergo the *suddhi*, or purification ceremony, at the hands of the Arya missionary at Lokhon Mañjhi's shrine. The Santals immediately announced that they would not recognize the validity of any such ceremony and that if it took place at their shrine they would cut down the tree and desecrate the shrine with their own hands. Many beliefs have grown up around the place. Binu of Tantidanga used to say that there were certainly times when the animals moved; he himself had twice seen them do so at the time of the *Pus* festival. He used to relate the local legend of how when Europeans had first tried to live at Sarenga they found

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it impossible to build a house. They were indigo planters, whose compound lay to the south of the shrine. Every time they tried to build the walls would crack, so in the end they offered a libation of their spirits to Lokhon Mañjhi and all was well. In recent times a Bengali Christian has built himself a house between the old indigo compound, now the mission compound, and the shrine without so far having suffered any dire consequences, but Binu would stoutly affirm that he makes offering to Lokhon in secret!

The main intention of the Santal cult of sacrifice is to ensure the stability of the society and the wellbeing of its members. The usual burden of the prayers and invocations, the *bakhet*, is to threaten or cajole the spirits so that sickness may be kept away from the village and that the rains may not fail. The example of a prayer that has been quoted[1] throws light on the attitude of the worshipper and the language that he uses. The prayer is the accompaniment of certain material offerings, and a strong hope is expressed that *Maraṅ Buru* will find the gifts adequate; there is, in fact, more than a suggestion that he ought to find them sufficient and do his duty in return. While material benefits are mainly sought,[2] this particular example reveals that Santal worshippers do sometimes look beyond the needs of the moment, for it is a prayer for a blessing of long life and happiness to be bestowed on a newly married couple. The language of the prayers is rhythmical; doublet words with rhyming endings and frequent repetition convey to the ear an effect similar to that given by rhymed verse. Often the prayers are spoken in colloquial Bengali, though the language in this case is Santali. The words themselves are not conceived of as "magical" in the sense that any alteration in their form or the omission of particular words would nullify the efficacy of the formula. There is obviously an element of magic in the ritual employed in sacrificing, but the prayers are uttered as accompaniment to the actions in order to draw the attention of the spirits to the latter. Most often the one who is uttering the prayer uses a loud and threatening tone of voice.

There is no individual approach to the *boingas*. Fellowship with them is maintained through sacrifices that are offered on

[1] See p. 67 above.

[2] Cf. E. O. James, *Comparative Religion*, 1938, p. 278: "In a primitive agricultural community requests for ethical and moral virtues could hardly be expected, since, as Cicero remarks, 'men call Jupiter greatest and best because he makes us not just or temperate or wise, but sound and healthy and rich and wealthy'." The citation is from *De Nat. Deorum*, III, 36, 87.